



2020 Annual Report



# FRESNO FIRE DEPARTMENT



2020 Annual Report



## City of Fresno

Population: .....540,000  
Land Area: ..... 115 sq. miles  
Elevation:..... 308 feet  
Population Density: ..... 4,695/sq. mi.  
Population Rank:..... 5th in California

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Mission:

To protect and put service above all else

## Vision:

Recognized as a standard of excellence  
in the fire service

## Core Values:

Teamwork ~ Trust ~ Commitment

## Fire Chief Kerri L. Donis



How do I begin to articulate the challenges 2020 brought to the Fresno Fire Department (FFD), our community and our country?! The FFD successfully managed the multi-level and complicated effects of COVID-19. The Department committed multiple crews and equipment to helping fire-threatened communities while fighting various wildfires throughout the State. Fresno Fire does incredible work in the field, as do our members in administration and prevention; with staffing levels that are below most, if not all, metro departments our size. Yet, this team delivers a quality service to the community each and every day.

COVID-19 required our firefighters to alter their daily work activities; to include mask wearing throughout the day, daily disinfecting of the fire station and apparatus, and a heightened level of safety precautions during emergency calls for service. These same challenges effected our administrative staff; adapting to immediate changes in work schedules. The lives of all members were deeply effected as families acclimated to various levels of disruption as a “new normal” was formed in this nation for the safety of everyone. Impressively, at no time during this global pandemic did our service levels to the citizens waiver.

California experienced over 4.2 million acres impacted by wildland fires, with the Creek Fire Incident being the largest wildland fire in the State’s history happening near Shaver and Huntington Lakes. The FFD had one of the first crews on-scene taking heroic action at

the Creek Incident to save structures and sent over 30 resources over a 30+ day period helping our local partners bring the fire under control.

Add the unavoidable perpetual focus of continued training and building the FFD Team, the Department was dedicated to ensure that operations, training, equipment and facilities met the needs of our citizenry. Our emergency responses, services, and programs are successful due to professionally trained and dedicated members of the Department. There is no finer group of men and women committed to excellence for the community in which they serve.

As Fire Chief, I am honored to lead the FFD and its members. The FFD marched steadily forward through 2020, proving yet again that the strength of our Department lies within our people!

## Proudly Serving



FRESNO YOSEMITE  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



Engine 3, protecting Downtown Fresno since 1938

## Operations Division

2020 was a very challenging year for the firefighting force of the Fresno Fire Department. The Department responded to 41,398 incidents from 21 fire stations. This covered an area of approximately 115 square miles with service to the City of Fresno, the Fig Garden Fire District, and Fresno Yosemite Airport. Contract services continued to the residents of the North Central Fire Protection District in the Northwest area of the City.

Fresno Fire's resources included 19 engines, five truck companies, and two aircraft rescue firefighting units. Three fire stations provided hazardous materials response, water rescue and urban search and rescue services. Daily staffing included 81 personnel managed by four battalion chiefs.

Total calls for service were down 6% from the previous year. However, due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and increased temperatures, our agency experienced record breaking increases in fire calls and emergencies where homeless persons were involved. Fire calls increased 48%. Structure fires increased by approximately 18% from the previous year, while vegetation fires increased 46%. In July, Fresno experienced the most fires on record, 636, in a single month. Furthermore, FFD responded to over 500 fires during each month of May, June, July, August, October, November, and December. Prior to 2020, Fresno had not responded to 500 fire calls in a single month during any prior year on record.

### **The following are examples of significant incidents in which FFD responded:**

- Three-Alarm house fire in the North Central Fire Protection District where four children and three adults were rescued and treated for life-threatening injuries. Two adults died while all others survived. Firefighters overcame multiple obstacles both exterior and interior of the home in order to effect rescues.
- Vehicle collision into a commercial building on Blackstone Avenue. A fire subsequently ignited with a passenger trapped in the vehicle. A quick response ensued that required firefighters to hold the fire in check while using extrication equipment to successfully rescue the victim. All the while, the Urban Search and Rescue Team stabilized the structure to prevent collapse.
- COVID-19 Pandemic – on March 16, 2020 the Fresno Fire Department opened its Departmental Operations Center to address multiple challenges anticipated as the virus began to spread to our community. An incident action plan was established each day with the intent of providing continuous service to the community, maintaining the health and safety of our workforce, providing them with timely information, and implementing control measures to prevent transmission. Through the dedicated efforts of our firefighters, support staff and volunteers, Fresno Fire has been able to maintain continuous service to our citizens with minimal exposure to our first responders.

- In May, a brush fire started on the side of Highway 41 near Friant Road. The fire spread to four homes adjacent to the freeway. A second and third alarm was dispatched as embers spread across the street, ignited a fifth house and threatened other homes in the neighborhood. Due to quick response, decisive action, and hard work of our firefighters the incident was brought under control quickly with minimal damage to homes.
- In June, crews responded to a 120-foot water tower at Fresno State University where a team of divers were about to complete maintenance work. Due to extreme heat, one worker suffering from heat exhaustion became incapacitated on the catwalk. The FFD Urban Search and Rescue Team accessed the patient, set up a haul system, and lowered the victim to a fully extended aerial platform. Crews lowered the victim and began CPR. Unfortunately, he succumbed to his injuries despite a valiant effort from our first responders.
- In 2020 alone, California experienced four of the State's five largest wildland fires in recorded history. The Creek, August Complex, Santa Cruz Complex and LNU Complex fires burned over 2 million acres. Fresno Fire filled over 140 resource orders in response to 30 separate incidents. This included 34 requests for equipment (engines, brush rigs, patrols and water tenders), Regional Task Force 5, our Rapid Extraction Module Support (REMS) and key overhead positions.

All the while, the Operations Division accomplished the following successes:

- Thanks to the Apparatus Committee, FFD placed four engines, two brush engines and two command vehicles in service.
- Daily staffing was increased from 80 to 81 personnel with the addition of a new 24-hour Safety Officer position.
- Four-minute response time was attained on average 68% of the time.
- Eight-minute assembly of effective firefighting force was met 88% of the time.
- The Department implemented a digital inspection and inventory system for stations, apparatus, and equipment.
- The voluntary participation rate of the FFD's Health and Wellness Program was over 90%.
- A communications plan was established that will enable FFD to improve transmitter coverage and separate radio usage from the North Central Fire Protection District beginning July 1, 2021.

Once again, through teamwork, trust, and commitment, your Fresno Fire Department stands ready to face the many challenges ahead.





## Training Division



In 2020, the Training Division delivered 61,474 hours of training, an approximate 10.96 percent decrease in training from the previous year's total of 69,047. This reduction was primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely reduced and limited the Department's ability to conduct and deliver training. Despite the setback, the Training Division continued to make significant progress in accomplishing all the goals and recommendations set forth in the SART Report. The Training Division was also in the forefront of the Department's response to the pandemic, facilitating the Department Operations Center (DOC) and building the updated Incident Action Plan (IAP). The Training Division played a lead role in ensuring that first responders and headquarters personnel were well trained on the federal, state, and local response plans for COVID-19 to ensure member and public safety, which minimized the Department's exposure to the virus.

The Training Division currently oversees the Special Operations unit, comprised of all specialty teams including the Hazardous Materials Response Team (HMRT), Urban Search and Rescue (US&R), Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF), and the Communications (COMM) Team. In July 2020, the Department stood up the Water Rescue Team (WRT), a specialized group of highly trained members with dive rescue, swiftwater, and rescue boat capabilities. The Training Division facilitated all necessary specialty training for these teams.

The Training Division was able to accomplish a significant goal this year by planning, organizing, and delivering the inaugural FFD Chief Officer Academy in May 2020. The primary goals of the Chief Officer Academy were to provide aspiring chief officers with knowledge about chief officer roles and responsibilities in the Fresno Fire Department and provide for succession planning. The Training Division was also able to deliver its Fifth Captain Academy in March 2020. The Department would like to thank all who were involved in helping in both academies. Your involvement made both academies a huge success and was a major investment in the Department's future leadership.

One of the most exciting additions to the Department in 2020 was the 56-hour Safety Officer position. This position provides a 24/7/365 Safety Officer response from a dedicated

station to every major emergency and fire in the City, increasing the control measures to create a safer workplace for our members. The Training Division hosted a Safety Officer Academy in September and the All Hazards Safety Officer (L-954) course in November. Several members received training to staff the 56-hour position and establish a reserve pool.

The Training Division published several guide resources for Department personnel, and the long-anticipated Truck Manual is nearing completion as it is in the final review stage.

The Training Division offered several state certified courses this year. A list of the certified courses included the following:

- Chief Fire Officer 3A – 3D
- Fire Inspector 2A – 2D
- Plans Examiner 1A
- Fire Investigations 1A – 1C
- Instructor 1
- Rescue Systems 2
- Rope Rescue Technician
- Trench Rescue Technician
- ICS 300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents
- River and Flood Rescue Technician
- Confined Space Rescue Technician
- Personal Watercraft Operations/Rescue
- River and Flood Rescue Boat Technician
- Hazardous Materials Technician Module A
- FEMA L-954 "All Hazards" Safety Officer

The table below provides a breakdown of the total training hours received by category:

**Table 1 - Training Hours by Category (Jan. 1, 2020 to Dec. 31, 2020)**

Training by Category	Training Hours	Percent
California State Fire Training	6,091	10%
Company Training	30,491	50%
Driver Operator	1,548	3%
EMS Training	3,129	5%
Hazardous Materials Training	2,444	4%
ICS/NIMS	492	1%
Multi-Company Drill	2,269	4%
Officer Development	4,287	6%
Specialty Team Training	9,440	15%
Wildland Training	1,283	2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61,474</b>	<b>100%</b>



*Captain Justin Moore instructing a Confined Space Technician course*



E7 Firefighter battling a blaze at a Salvation Army storage yard



Battalion Chief Cope in command



Fire Prevention Inspectors and Headquarters staff participating in Firefighter for a Day



Family First, the FFD Way



## 2020 Annual Statistics

### Budget

General Fund.....	\$67.7M
Grants.....	\$1.2M
License & Permit .....	\$658K
Charges for Service.....	\$5.8M
Contract Fees.....	\$2.3M
Capital .....	\$424.7K
<b>Total Budget.....</b>	<b>\$78.0M</b>

### Units

Engine Companies.....	19
Truck Companies .....	5
Water Rescue Vehicles.....	2
Patrols .....	4
HazMat Units.....	1
USAR Heavy Rescue .....	1
Airport Rescue Vehicles .....	2

### Personnel

Sworn Safety.....	305
Sworn Non-Safety.....	19
Civilian .....	27
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>351</b>

### Daily Staffing

City of Fresno & FGFPD.....	81
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### Incidents

Medical Aids.....	26,345
Arrivals: 82.7% .....	21,789
Downgrades: 17.3% .....	4,556
Total Fires .....	5,526
Structure Fires:.....	1,045
Vegetation Fires:.....	933
Vehicle Fires: .....	333
Other Types of Fires: .....	3,215
False Alarms.....	2,517
Hazardous Conditions.....	982
Service Calls.....	1,573
All Other Incidents.....	4,455
<b>Total Incidents .....</b>	<b>41,398</b>

### Fire Loss

All Fires.....	\$25.5M
From Arson.....	\$4.5M
Displaced Persons by Fire .....	761

### Fatalities

Total Civilian Fatalities.....	7
Total Firefighter Fatalities .....	0

### Injuries

Civilian Injuries .....	20
Firefighter Injuries.....	81

### Fire Investigations

Total Investigations.....	635
Incendiary Fires.....	279
Arrests .....	61

### Fire Prevention

5 Year Fire Sprinkler Tests.....	891
New Sprinkler Inspections .....	1,686
Plan Reviews.....	3,677
Fire Inspections.....	4,252

### Fire Shop

Repair Requests.....	3,922
Completed Repairs .....	3,778



Engine 4, A Shift, "Fire Factory"





E20 captain decontaminating after a structure fire



Fire and EMS working together



Truckyard fire E19 first due



Ladder 1 venting a roof in heavy fog at a structure fire

## Company Response Times

### First company arrival within 4 minutes

Structure Fires Only .....	72%
Medical Aids.....	62%
Fires.....	68%

### Effective residential firefighting force (EFF)

within 8 minutes* .....	87%
(15 Firefighters on scene)	

### Effective commercial firefighting force (EFF)

within 8 minutes* .....	88%
(21 Firefighters on scene)	

\*Stations North of Shaw Ave. had an effective firefighting force (EFF) effectiveness rating of 65% in 2020

## Station Responses – 54,851

Station .....	Responses
S01 .....	5,215
S02 .....	1,332
S03 .....	5,982
S04 .....	3,759
S05 .....	4,021
S06 .....	2,189
S07 .....	2,604
S08 .....	3,054
S09 .....	5,184
S10 .....	1,103
S11 .....	4,154
S12 .....	2,743
S13 .....	2,167
S14 .....	1,269
S15 .....	2,013
S16 .....	1,610
S17 .....	830
S18 .....	870
S19 .....	2,531
S20 .....	2,221
Airport.....	134

## Company Responses – 51,384

Engine Companies .....	45,853
Company .....	Responses
E01 .....	3,328
E02 .....	1,305
E03 .....	4,663
E04 .....	3,751
E05 .....	4,021
E06 .....	2,189
E07 .....	2,507
E08 .....	3,054
E09 .....	3,397
E10 .....	1,103
E11 .....	2,696
E12 .....	2,743
E13 .....	2,138
E15 .....	1,991
E16 .....	1,610
E17 .....	830
E18 .....	870
E19 .....	2,009
E20 .....	1,648

### Battalion Chiefs

Unit .....	Responses
BC01 .....	751
BC02 .....	498
BC03 .....	482
BC04 .....	621

## Truck Companies ..... 5,531

Company .....	Responses
T01 .....	1,057
T03 .....	1,304
T09 .....	1,166
T11 .....	819
T14 .....	1,185

### Special Operations

Unit .....	Responses
Airport Rescue Firefighting	
(ARFF) Vehicles .....	134
BRS1 - Breathing Support .....	56
CERT1 -	
Community Emergency	
Response Team.....	15
HazMat Units.....	87
Investigations .....	697
P02 - Patrol .....	27
P07 - Patrol .....	52
P14 - Patrol .....	84
P15 - Patrol .....	12
PIO1 - Public Information	
Officer.....	39
Heavy Rescue .....	155
Water Rescue .....	42
WT07 - Water Tender .....	45
WT13 - Water Tender .....	29

## *Fire Investigation Unit*

The FFD Fire Investigation Unit (FIU) is comprised of one supervisor, three 40-hour staff investigators, three 24-hour scene investigators, four reserve investigators, and an accelerant detection Labrador K-9 named “Tessa”. Scene investigators are the face of the FIU and hold the responsibility of determining the origin and cause of fires that are illegal or arson, high profile/high dollar loss, involve significant injury or a fatality, are related to a drug cultivation or manufacturing, occur at a government or religious institution or that are determined to be complex and out of the scope of our fire suppression personnel.

2020 brought many challenges but none as significant as those associated with a drastic increase in call volume, specifically, in the homeless involved and vegetation fire categories. The FIU works cooperatively with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies when required. The FIU responded to and investigated 635 incidents, affecting more than 59 arrests, and approximately 39 citations. FIU staff investigators also conducted 57 professional background investigations and seven professional standards investigations.

With the support of FFD Training, the FIU staff trained new fire investigators: offering all three State Fire Marshal Investigations courses, the PC 832 module, and several fire investigation incident specific training modules. The FIU continues to strive to be a leader in the fire investigations industry by continually honing our craft through professional fire investigations and offering quality training to Department members and surrounding agencies.



*Fire Investigation Unit*

## *CERT*



Since 2003, the Community Emergency Response Team has prepared residents to be ready to serve our neighbors and support our first responders when called on. Despite the challenges of 2020, our goal remains to be *ready, resilient and resourceful*. While all in-person training was suspended early in the year, a robust campaign of volunteer and community education and engagement continued virtually. The momentum was enhanced by a significant grant from CalOES and Listos California that facilitated delivery of training and preparedness resources to nearly 2,000 underserved residents.

Emphasis was also placed on ensuring that CERT leaders and the volunteer team remained resilient through the targeted acquisition of technology assets needed in a rapidly changing environment. Despite the unprecedented challenges caused by the pandemic and historic wildfires, the CERT team responded to 12 emergent calls for rehab support; and adeptly managed the shelter operations for 125 campers evacuated by helicopter during the massive Creek Fire.

The Rehab Team has deployed a total of 168 times since it was established. In the spirit of respect and support for our life-safety partners, CERT volunteers donated 210 meals to fire, EMS and law enforcement dispatchers. In this historic year, CERT remained focused on providing results-oriented and cost-effective programs that deliver meaningful support to the Fresno Fire Department and our community.

## *Thank You*

*Dear Firefighters:*

*We are so thankful for all the hard work you've put in helping fight the Creek Fire. You have given us hope in so much more than just our home but in the hearts of humanity.*

*Gina, Diego and Gianna Vigil*



## *Fire Prevention and Support Services Division*

The mission of the Fire Prevention Division is to provide fire and life-safety services to the citizens of the City of Fresno. These services include participation in public education and community outreach events; providing support to programs under the Community Outreach umbrella; conducting inspections on existing commercial and multi-family buildings; and, providing fire related plan review and field inspections on both residential and commercial new construction projects.

The Support and Technical Services Division provides logistical and technical support to the department, ensuring all divisions have the equipment and supplies needed to effectively serve the community. Through these efforts, the Division supports and educates the community, ensuring community members are aware that a fire and life-safe environment contributes to a healthy community for all.

While this was a challenging year, the Division was able make the necessary adjustments to ensure the safety of all members while continuing to provide these vital services to the community we serve.



*The staff of Fire Prevention & Support Services Division*

## *Fire Shop*



*The dedicated members of the Fresno Fire Shop*

The Fire Shop continues to improve in the “On-Time” service for preventative maintenance work on the Department’s Fleet. The Fire Shop has also engaged in special projects to keep the apparatus in top working order. The Fire Shop fosters an environment of training and education, with a number of the mechanics achieving Fire Mechanic certification levels from the Office of the State Fire Marshal, the others earning their required ASE certifications. The shop is comprised of 16 team members that cover two shifts, as well as 24/7 on-call service and support to the Fire Department.



*Ladder 3 on scene*





## Community Outreach



*Honorary Firefighter Arianna engaged in "fire attack" training*

The Department encourages our firefighters to seek creative and thoughtful ways to engage with the community. Events range from school carnivals and fire drills; to car shows and block parties; conducting fire station tours as well as home safety inspections where smoke alarms may be installed. Our hope is that these intentional and frequent interactions will build positive relationships and promote safer communities.



*Firefighter Specialist Carlton Jones and Firefighter Shannon Swillis providing public education*

## Fresno Fire Chief's Foundation

The **Fresno Fire Chief's Foundation (FFCF)** is a non-profit organization which partners with the FFD to support several programs. The Fresno Fire Department **Explorer Program** provides young men and women (14-22 years old) with insight into the firefighting world. The **Helmets are Cool** program has provided over 15,000 free helmets to children since its inception. This is done through school programs, fire station tours, and distributed by firefighters on engine and truck companies. **Firefighters Creating Memories** allows families with developmentally or physically disabled children to enjoy The Big Fresno Fair in the presence of Fresno firefighters. Those families are escorted through the fairgrounds and assisted on rides by the firefighters participating in the program. To learn more about the FFCF work in the community, go to the website at [www.beafirehero.org](http://www.beafirehero.org).

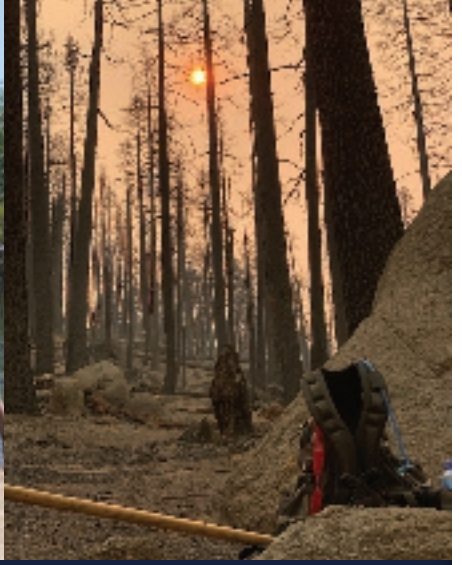


*Girls Empowerment Camp*



*FFD members helping a family enjoy The Big Fresno Fair with the Firefighters Creating Memories program*









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